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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

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CUBA

Cuba and Hungary signed a five-year trade agreement on 5 April, and on the following day the Cuban cultural delegation now touring bloc countries signed a cultural agreement for 1961 with Poland. The latter pact provides for an exchange of teachers, artists, and exhibitions, and for radio and television cooperation.

There are new press rumors of a Khrushchev-Castro meeting before the end of the year, possibly in Cuba. Khrushchev accepted an invitation to visit Cuba which was proffered last June and renewed at the UN last September. Soviet sources said in October that Khrushchev was planning to visit Cuba sometime during 1961, probably following a Castro visit to Moscow. The present report is attributed by Mexican press sources to the Soviet ambassador in Cuba, who recently returned to Havana following a trip to Mexico.

The press reported on 6 April that many Communist technicians were leaving Cuba because of disgust with the inefficiency of the Castro government. Groups of Czech aviation instructors and bank advisers were also reported to have returned home recently. Passenger manifests of the new Havana-Prague route to Cubana Airlines, however, do not show any noteworthy change in either eastward or westward movement of

bloc personnel through 28 March.

Anti-Castro Activity

The pace of anti-Castro activity both inside Cuba and among Cuban exiles is mounting, and sabotage efforts against Cuban industrial and commercial installations are being stepped up. Insurgent bands are actively engaging Castro's forces in several Cuban provinces.

Skirmishes between government forces and insurgents in eastern Oriente Province are continuing to occur, although Raul Castro asserted on 6 April that government army and militia troops had liquidated the centers of resistance there. According to information reaching the US Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay, the government's saturation of the area with militia forces is forcing some of the ill-equipped anti-Castro guerrilla bands in the area to disband.

After seven months, guerrillas are still active in the Sierra Escambray region of Las Villas Province, although government counteraction and shortages of supplies have considerably reduced their numbers and mobility to the point where resistance may not be continued much longer.

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Economic Difficulties

The increasing frequency with which Castro and other government leaders attempt in their speeches to minimize present material shortages underlines the regime's mounting concern with economic difficulties. On 6 April President Dorticos referred to the responsibility of "aggressive imperialism" for "minor shortages" in Cuba, and Castro conceded on 8 April that "some things, it is true, are lacking, but only luxury items used by the minority." Later in the same speech Castro said his regime was "ready to ration articles so the people will not have to suffer."

A recent reliable report stated that the Cuban Bank of Foreign Commerce instructed all of its commercial attachés abroad to attempt to purchase a number of critical parts for electrical, industrial, and communications facilities. The majority of the parts being sought were formerly supplied by American companies, the report said. An untested Cuban source also reported on 5 April that the Castro government plans to announce before the end of April that it will recall all outstanding peso notes and replace them at the rate of one new peso for two old. The new pesos reportedly will be inscribed "People's Republic of Cuba."

At the UN

Cuba has enlisted the support of the Afro-Asian bloc in its efforts to have the UN call for bilateral discussions between Havana and Washington. Indonesia has been circulating a draft resolution along these lines which reportedly has the support of some Latin Americans.

To forestall the Afro-Asian initiative, the 12 Latin American countries which have diplomatic relations with Cuba have agreed that they must submit a resolution. The Venezuelan UN delegate considers that the debate on the Cuban complaint will be "so explosive that he could not imagine it being conducted without a resolution."

The 12 countries have drafted a resolution which in effect equates the US with Cuba, thereby dignifying Cuban charges. It also fails to define the problem specifically as a hemisphere matter that should be handled by the Organization of American States. The Latin Americans, however, have indicated a willingness to amend it. Their initiative makes it virtually certain that the General Assembly will issue a resolution in some form.
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INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

COUNTRY Cuba

REPORT NO. OO-2 3,156,062

SUBJECT

Living Conditions/Anti-Castroist
Reaction to Regime's Activities

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To 14 Apr 61

PLACE &
DATE ACQ

14 Apr 61

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

SOURCE

1. I received the following in a letter in Spanish dated 14 Apr 61 from a close relative who resides in Cuba:
2. "... As to the atmosphere in which we are living in Havana, there is a constant persecution and propaganda which has been increased for different reasons against what the Fidelistas call the 'traitors, sabirros, worms, etc.'
3. "... There is no insult which has not been aimed at anyone who is not in full agreement with the regime and against persons who do not celebrate and applaud all that is going on and what Fidel states in his now almost daily speeches which have several hours' duration each.
4. "... The insults to the priests are so many and so awful that I do not like to repeat them. As an example of what the regime does, it published the Shadow of the Sacred Heart Church over the city of Havana with the claim 'Havana Under the Jesuit Shadow, falsistas, priests, sabirros, who are undertaking criminal actions as a result of Yankee pressure and money.'
5. "... Every large act of sabotage which cannot be hidden is blamed on the priest and the US President. Last night [13 Apr 61] at 7 pm there was a terrible fire at El Encanto. The whole building was in flames which could be seen from all over Havana. This started a general feeling of excitement, and many of the people were happy about the sabotage, so the Fidelistas got hold of their trained brigades and started screaming their propaganda, that is, 'To the wall, etc.' Well, it was fantastic. The building finally collapsed. Today the excitement has been at its peak and there has been considerable activity among the militia. Everywhere one goes he can hear the Fidelistas saying, 'We must kill those worms, etc.,' and *Revolucion's* editorial points to Kennedy as the guilty one and calls him criminal, murderer, arsonist, etc.
6. "... When there is a lot of excitement going on, the Fidelistas play the national hymn through loudspeakers in the streets and after the music keep repeating their propaganda slogans.
7. "There also was a fire at a paper company on Puentes Grandes, but it seems the regime was able to handle it; and also there were some fires at important stores in Santiago.

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7. "... I heard a priest friend who usually rides buses in Havana say that each time he took a ride in one, he was required to have an argument. He said, 'Probably among the public there are some Catholics, but no one dares answer, so I have to defend me by myself.' This priest is one who dares to speak out with an answer. Others keep quiet just as if they did not hear.
8. "... Our main streets are full of small counters where the Fidelistas sell books on Marxism propaganda about the USSR, Communism, etc. Also they write up a lot of laws which they publish and sell at these places so that the people learn about them.
9. "... There is a law which allows that one may carry jewelry which weighs less than 18 'adarmes,' about 32 'gramos.' If anyone is found with something heavier than this, the regime simply confiscates it. One is expected to take the rest of his jewelry to the National Bank so that if the country needs it, the country will have it at hand. At the same counters are also sold photographs, revolutionary insignia, etc., so that our Havana sidewalks really have quite a different aspect than they used to have.
10. "Many of our good residential homes which have been taken and are being used by Soviets, Chinese, or Czech diplomats or instructors are now being fortified; that is, big walls are being raised all around them with wires.
11. "At the present time it is typical to see large queues form outside the markets in order to be able to buy things which are found just now and then. The markets will sell just one item per person of such things as soap, cleaners, etc. At this time the regime sends cars with loud-speakers which say 'Do not complain of forming lines to buy. It would be worse if you had to form these lines in order to identify the corpses of your children cut or severed.' This lack of things is due to 'traitors latifundistas, imperialists, etc.'
12. "... Every day more necessary food is scarce and the prices go higher. At the large markets one sees a lot of empty areas and one cannot find what he went to look for, but must buy what is available.
13. "In general, large quantities of Soviet canned goods stay right there on the shelves because people do not buy them. I cannot say that we are hungry, but indeed it is obvious that a great need is arising. All those who are able to do so have a small stock at home for bad days ahead and also emergency water, because it is feared that sabotage may do away with water some time. This has been tried already, but it has been solved.
14. "Many people are taking a lot of risks these days by joining the 'resistance' in varied forms, even though at all times the regime is arresting people whether they are guilty or not. The latter are taken to the G-2 buildings and they say the treatment is awful because of the unsanitary conditions; for example, in a previous two-car garage there are 20 beds. Into this they put 40 persons. Right there in plain sight they have a toilet and a small shower, but no towels or paper; all these places are full of bad odors.
15. "The prisoners are made to undergo infinite interrogations which last for hours and are really mental tortures. When the prisoners are finally let free, they are morally sick; otherwise the regime starts a new proceeding against them and sends them to another jail. But do not believe that all this makes people frightened. Oh, no, they keep on with their work or new ones do. It is almost unbelievable. Often under any pretext representatives of the regime do these things to a group of Catholic youth.
16. "... The most important action of Holy Week was that instead of making the procession at El Calvario as in previous years, this time they decided to have it in the middle of the city. So, Monsignor Bosa started it at La Parroquia de la Caridad and directed it to go in front of the capital. About 80,000 people joined the procession with enthusiasm and order. The

militiamen tried to stop the procession, because Monsignor Boza had asked for permission but it had not been granted. But seeing the number of people, the militiamen seemed to have become scared and let the procession go. It was a wonderful profession of faith. On the streets, from houses and balconies, people sang or kept quiet and waved their handkerchiefs. Throughout the island there were some problems of different churches. For example, at Bejucal, the church members started to act the Passion, but there was a fight, shooting, and the show could not be finished.

17. "In general, Holy Week gave testimony of the people's faith; all the churches were crowded.
18. "... There is an obvious renovation of faith. Catholic youth are studying Christian sociology since their interest in instruction has been aroused and they want to be prepared against lies. The worst aspect is the ignorance of the people in this atmosphere of evil.
19. "... Many Fidelistas have now commenced to say that their religion is their own problem and that they can be Fidelistas and not atheists, but of course the two fields are getting quite clear now in Cuba. Either Cubans are Catholics with the Church or they are against it.
20. "... I believe many people are renewing their faith now, but it seems incredible that so many sincere persons approve of all that is happening and deny being Communist. One who does this either does not know what the word means or is a complete ignoramus. Here it is proved that the regime's propaganda psychologically changes the mentality. It is just a matter of time. It is most necessary to counteract this indoctrination, but we cannot reach all people. That is why it is so terrible and so necessary to put an end to the regime soon. Our poor children and youth are not fit for this battle, and even among adults there are many who are so terribly ignorant that they believe the lies. Really, they do not know what they are doing.
21. "... Here there is courage because there is optimism. They all believe that what happened in Hungary will not happen here because we all believe that there will be outside help since our problem is not only ours. We just hope it does not take much longer. . . ."